

Message Text

SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6391

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 6877

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PK, US, PFOR

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S TRAVEL PLANS

1. I KNOW THAT IF YOUR PLANS TO VISIT TEHRAN AND KABUL BECOME FIRM, YOU WILL BE DELUGED WITH CABLES FROM MOST OF MY COLLEAGUES IN THE AREA ARGUING THAT UNLESS YOU VISIT THEIR HOST COUNTRIES AS WELL THE FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE SEVERELY SHAKEN. DESPITE THIS OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD, I DO FEEL I SHOULD WEIGH IN TO ASK THAT YOU GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO A SHORT STOP IN PAKISTAN AS A NATURAL EXTENSION TO A VISIT TO ITS TWO MUSLIM NEIGHBORS.

2. BECAUSE IT WOULD BELINKED WITH THESE VISITS, A STOPOVER IN PAKISTAN WOULD INEVITABLY UNDERSCORE AND ENCOURAGE BHUTTO'S LAUDABLE EFFORT TO TURN PAKISTAN'S VISAGE WESTWARD, AWAY FROM THE STERILE CONCENTRATION ON INDO-PAK RELATIONS WHICH HAVE CHARACTERIZED THE FOREIGN POLICY APPROACHES OF PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS HERE. YOUR COMING HERE FROM IRAN AND AFGHANISTAN WOULD ALSO SERVE TO DEMONSTRATE OUR SUPPORT FOR THE COMMENDABLE STEPS BHUTTO HAS TAKEN RECENTLY TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN. IT WOULD STRENGTHEN HIS RESOLVE TO MOVE FURTHER IN THIS DIRECTION AND, BY BOLSTERING HIS PRESTIGE, ENHANCE HIS ABILITY TO DO SO. BHUTTO IS EXTREMELY PROUD

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OF THE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP HE HAS ESTABLISHED WITH YOU

AND ONE OF THE STRONGEST ASPECTS OF OUR TIES WITH PAKISTAN IS THAT THE PM BELIEVES THAT THIS PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP GREATLY AIDS OUR MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHER'S POLICIES AND POSITIONS. YOUR COMING TO PAKISTAN AT A TIME WHEN THE GOP IS BREAKING NEW GROUND THROUGH ITS INITIATIVES IN THE REGION WOULD MEAN A GREAT DEAL TO HIM, AND TO US-PAKISTAN RELATIONS AS WELL.

3. YOU'LL RECALL HOW DISAPPOINTED BHUTTO WAS LAST YEAR WHEN THE PRESIDENT WAS NOT ABLE TO VISIT HERE IN CONNECTION WITH HIS CHINA TRIP. I THINK IT ONLY FAIR TO SAY THAT THIS DISAPPOINTMENT WOULD BE GREATLY COMPOUNDED WERE YOU TO COME TO THE AREA WITHOUT A CALL HERE. HE WOULD QUESTION WHY, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE MEASURES HE HAS TAKEN, YOU WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO STOP AT LEAST BRIEFLY IN ISLAMABAD TO DISCUSS BILATERAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL POLICIES WITH HIM IN THE CANDID AND EASY MANNER THE TWO OF YOU HAVE SO EFFECTIVELY DEVELOPED. THIS WOULD BE ESPECIALLY TRUE IF YOU DID VISIT AFGHANISTAN, WHICH BHUTTO TENDS TO VIEW (I MUST SAY WITH SOME BASIS IN FACT) AS A RELATIVELY MINOR ACTOR IN THE REGION COMPARED WITH PAKISTAN.

4. I RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS A LONGSTANDING TRADITION THAT ANY VISIT TO PAKISTAN MUST BE LINKED WITH ONE TO INDIA. I SUSPECT THAT MANY OF US IN THE AREA, NOT EXCLUDING COLLEAGUES AT EMBASSY DELHI, HAVE COME TO BELIEVE THAT THIS LINKING IS NO LONGER IN OUR OWN NATIONAL INTEREST AND IS NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE NEW REALITIES OF THE POLITICS OF THE AREA. YOUR COMING HERE FROM PAKISTAN'S MUSLIM NEIGHBORS TO THE WEST OFFERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DELINK INDIA AND PAKISTAN. BY DOING SO, IT WOULD FURTHER UNDERSCORE OUR SUPPORT FOR THE WESTWARD ORIENTATION BHUTTO HAS TRIED TO BRING TO PAK FOREIGN POLICY. IT WOULD ALSO SERVE TO DEMONSTRATE TO YIM THAT HIS VIEW OF HIS RELATIONS WITH US AS SEPARATE FROM US-INDIAN TIES WAS RECIPROCATED.

5. THERE ARE, OF COURSE, SEVERAL PRESSING ISSUES IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN WHICH COULD BE USEFULLY
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DISCUSSED WHEN YOU VISITED. I WILL NOT GO INTO THEM IN THIS MESSAGE, BUT IF YOU DO DECIDE TO COME TO ISLAMABAD WE WILL OF COURSE GIVE YOU OUR THOUGHTS IN LATER CABLES.
BYROADE

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